



LAYS OF MALVERN



BY

SPIRITS OF THE SPRING.

BIRMINGHAM:

BRAME BROTHERS, EDMUND STREET; HUDSON AND SON, BULL STREET;
NAPPER AND WRIGHT, NEW STREET.

WORCESTER—LEIGHTON, MALVERN—CROSS; LAMB, POST OFFICE.

1859.

THE MARY ANN



THE MARY ANN

THE MARY ANN
THE MARY ANN
THE MARY ANN

Lays of Malvern.

As I lay half awake on a cold foggy morning,
Awaiting the clock's dull monotonous warning ;
I mused on the troubles, and trials, and sighs,
Men have to encounter when early they rise.
I confess I remember the Iron Duke said,
" Let the first turn you make be the turn out of bed ;"
But Hood clearly says about rising too soon,
" If a man 's fond of stirring he must be a spoon."
So while I was doubting which course to pursue,
This vision fantastic appeared to my view :
One night, in Olympus, Jove gave a grand feast
To all in his kingdom, from greatest to least ;
And Juno had sent a polite invitation,
Which, like royal invites, left no room for negation :
" With riddles and small-talk they shouldn't be bored,
" For one of the party was fresh from abroad,
" And had promised to give them a little diversion,
" By a rhyming account of his recent excursion."
So the deities sent in acceptances hearty,
For that rarest of treats, an æsthetical party.
A banquet was served in the imperial halls,
Where the gods love to revel at parties and balls,

Mars, Bacchus and Vulcan,—that sooty old gnome,—
Diana, and Venus all bright from the foam ;
But to give all their names is not now my intention,
What nectar they quaffed I can't possibly mention.

The usual toasts given and received with loud cheers,
At great Jove's right hand a young spirit appears ;
And thus he describes, if I rightly remember,
His visit to earth in the month of September :

“ With permission of absence from present employment,
I determined to go on a tour of enjoyment ;
I'd long wished to visit the regions of Earth,
'Twas my fondest desire since the day of my birth.
So I soon sped away, swift as Iris or Fame,
On a wonderful courser with long tail of flame,
That made quite a splendour of night, and afar
Shone across the wide heaven, over planet and star ;
I stayed a few days in the realms of the Bear,
And followed the chase as the weather was fair.
'Twas the season for shooting, but sport I had none,
There were *pointers* at hand, but I'd not brought my gun ;
Still I rode after *Lepus*, with hardy *Orion*,
And old *Sagittarius*—a good shot,—and *Dian* ;
I struck the star-*Lyre*, pulled *Berenice's* hair,
Kissed *Cassiopæia* asleep in her chair,
Plumped a *Fish* into each of the *Waterman's* pails,
Helped the *Twins*, who were *Crab-catching*, twisted the
Then baiting my steed at the ‘ *Man in the Moon*,’ [*Scales*,
I arrived safe and sound upon Earth about noon.

There's one thing of note I've omitted to mention,
For I ne'er thought 'twas I who had fixed their attention,
The wondering mortals were vastly excited,
They'd rush out at sunset and come back delighted ;
And strange to relate, I soon learnt at their parties
They raved of a comet and called it ' Donati's.'
I had noticed them oft as I sped through the distance,
Intent on the skies as if needing assistance ;
With long tubes and glasses, and looks most ecstatic,
I thought they belonged to the regions lunatic.
I wished to adopt the costume of the land,
So the fitting-out shops I most narrowly scanned ;
I noticed one ' licensed for spirits retailing,'
But found them engaged in strong liquors inhaling ;
So I went to a potter's, for mortals do say,
That their body corporate's nothing but clay,
Stept into the oven, and out through the portal,
Translated immediately into a mortal.

I alit, as it chanced, on that far little island,
Which once was imagined the last bit of dry land
In all the Old World : fronting sunset it lies,
On the verge where the reddened wave blends with the skies ;
By a large rolling river I stood, where its brown
Flood, full flavoured and freighted, to ocean dashed down
Through a city more regal,—in more pride of place,—
Than the Capitol erst in its palmiest days ;
And the miracles there that bewildered my view
Passed the art of Prometheus, and Dædalus too :

There were some who had learned the dread secret of fire,
Revenged on the Titan when Jove's awful ire
Hurled him prone on the glaciers of Caucasus, seared
Thro' and thro' with the bolt that had singed off his beard :
And they flashed the bright lightnings about at their will,
From one end of the world to the other, until
I found, and I own I felt somewhat of pique,
That mortals had managed to make the flash speak,
For now, though I say it, their messengers beat
Iris, swiftest of wing, or my own feathered feet ;
Others hid the fire inside a dark dreadful monster,
As Phalaris once in his bull, to my conster-
-nation it tore like the Furies away
From the day into night, through the night into day,
Whirling crowds at its tail in scarce visible cars,
So fast roll the flying wheels over their bars ;
With fire in their ships others rush through the main,
Till the sea-halls of Neptune are shaken again ;
They stay not for tempest, they dash by the wind,
And the thunder comes after, the levin lags behind—
Of these fire-ships I saw on the shore where I lighted
One vast enough, gods !—(if I lie Jove requite it,)
To bear in its ample recesses a nation,
And the pilot at watch will make sure affirmation,
As he sees its black bulk dimly huge on the ocean,
Laying largely along without noises or motion,
' The trident which struck Lemnos up from the sea
Has created another great island—Papæ !'

But I burned for the other strange sights of the isle,
So I did not remain by the Thames a long while.
From London to Worcester by railway I came,
And thence on to Malvern so well known to fame ;
With its beautiful hills and its life-giving waters,
Where bloom, like the Graces, the Earth's fairest daughters.
This last I insert by your special permission,
For to say much about 'em might raise a sedition ;
They walk up and down, and they drink at the fountains,
Or with Alpine stocks climb the delectable mountains.
With round-about hats crowning dimples and eyes,
For whose sake Jove himself has forsaken the skies ;
Then our phantasy measures a dear little waist,
Neat as some that the Thunderer's arm has embraced,
Swelling into a framed sphere, vast as the sweep
Of the chariot of Phœbus, and daintily peep
Below this expanse of robes, ankles and feet
Which stir the slow pulse, and make quick the heart-beat ;
With the gloss of the peacock, and plumes of the pheasant,
They deck their smart hats, and it seems passing pleasant
To see light forms fluttering about on the hills,
Like winged things (there's nectar divine in their bills),
Out-spread like the broad bird of Argus, and gay
As the chequered mag-pie, or as bright as the jay.
In mushrooms and Balmorals looking so charming,
The goddesses truly might think it alarming ;
If often deserting their presence they caught us,
I fear at head-quarters they'd quickly report us ;

So jealous they are in asserting their rights,
We should soon bid farewell to all earthly delights.
So I strolled about Malvern and searched out its treasures,
Found merry companions and joined in their pleasures;
There were archery meetings and fine rustic sports,
With musical parties and fetes of all sorts.
No notion have ye of the frolic and mirth,
Or of half the gay scenes I enjoyed upon Earth;
Though here now and then Jove permits dissipation,
It goes on below without any cessation.
Thus time passed away and my joy was complete,
'Til I chanced one fine day a fell spirit to meet.
He, mindful of quarrels in ages gone by,
Vowed vengeance against me, and swore he would try
By divers enchantments to tempt to excess,
And my new laws of being to make me transgress.
Despising his threats, and contingencies scorning,
To a pic-nic I started the very next morning.
All nature was decked with her innocent smile,
And the sun shed a glory on Albion's isle;
To the Wind's-eye we mounted, whence upland and dale
Swell away to the breast of the bright happy vale
Softly smiling below, like a vision of Peace,
And of pastoral Plenty, which Ceres increase!
And there where of yore the dark Raven had hovered,
And Danish marauders the champaign had covered
With wild-fire and war, where their tents had been set
When their spears with the life of the Saxon were wet,

Where their spies kept look-out on the left hand and right,
While the red "beacon"-flame glared aloft on the night,
We encamped for a skirmish of pleasanter sort,
To assault pigeon-pies, to demolish old port ;
And champagne, and ices, and lobsters, and cider,
Evanished, like snow before summer on Ida,
While fires of another description were lit,
And there flashed but the tips of cigars—and our wit.
Thus, with swiftness unnoted, fled by the glad hours,
Unheeded as spirit's foot-fall upon flowers ;
There was nothing to trouble, and nought to annoy,
No chance wind to ruffle our smooth stream of joy ;
Not a sound, not a sight, in the earth or the sky
To recall the fell Furies of ages gone by :
Rusty helms, whitened bones, were deep down under-ground,
And none to recount the fierce story was found.
So we lazily lounged as we fancied most pleasant,
With thought of no one mortal thing but the present.
(Wise mortals observe a condition most fitting,
And give pic-nics only ' the weather permitting').
Thus far all went well, but too sad to relate,
Full soon I had cause to regret my hard fate ;
For the case which I made for myself from the clay,
Began to show premature signs of decay.
Like mortals I feasted, plain viands rejected,
And never a check to indulgence expected ;
The clay constitution, by revel and riot,
And no sort of care for a sensible diet, .

Was sadly disjointed by constant excess,
And Nature cried loudly for instant redress.
That night how I tossed and late pleasures repented,
And wished that those pic-nics had ne'er been invented ;
When lo ! that same spirit appeared to my view,
And grimly exulted ' Here's vengeance for you.'
That night, O ye gods ! how my hair stood on end,
How I longed for the morning, and then for some friend
To give me relief, when I needed it most,
Abandoned by all but hobgoblin and ghost.
Long time did I lie in this pitiful plight,
'Til again the fell spirit appeared to my sight.
There followed this time at his heels a strange crowd,
With long hungry faces, and menaces loud,
With hands full of setons, and blisters, and issues,
And lancets to steal the red blood from the tissues.
Such torments as these I was daily enduring,
For none could agree on the right mode of curing ;
Oh ! for months I was under those horrid M.D.'s,
But they can't cure a cold, or a cough, or a sneeze,
Without filling your system chock-full of disease,
Yet to finger your money are busy as bees.
I struggled, half dead, with these numberless ills,
While they talked of more blisters, and then of more pills ;
But I vowed I'd no longer submit to such horrors,
These pretenders have filled the fair globe with their terrors.
If you doubt this account of the medical trade,
I'll give you the case of a friend I then made.

By Nature endow'd with a fine healthy frame,
He had studied too hard for the sake of a name ;
Just hear the opinions he got seriatim
From eminent doctors ; I give them verbatim—
“ I had read rather late for an examination,
And felt in the eyes something like inflammation ;
I was not a fast man, neither drinker nor smoker,
Yet drooped from a wit to no end of a croaker.
Like a fool I repaired to the regular doctors,
And chemists and druggists, their poison concoctors ;
They made of my case what is called diagnosis,
And ordered strong medicines in infinite doses.
Each gave his opinion so learned and wise,
First looked at the tongue and then tested the eyes ;
On only two points these wise-acres agreed—
That I must be physicked, and they must be fee'd.
One said, ‘ No matter, ’tis bad circulation,’
Another, ‘ Its merely a slight inflammation,’
A third, ‘ Pluck up spirits, ’tis imagination,’
A fourth, ‘ Take more wine, never fear dissipation,’
A fifth, ‘ Roam about and take more recreation,’
A sixth, ‘ Its all humbug, mere infatuation,’
And all said, ‘ We'll put you in good preservation.’
One day in the town a clairvoyante arrived,
Whose success was so great that my spirits revived ;
My course was soon taken—she fell in a trance,
And read my internal affairs at a glance.
She, inspired by I know not what power mysterious,

Returned this oracular answer and serious :
' You've no circulation, no life in your blood,
'Tis sherry and water, your bile is but mud ;
Your brain is suffused, and your eye filmy, very ;
You've been dosed, and will soon gain the Stygian ferry,
Your nerves are like cotton, your muscles are wool,
Take a globule of nux when the moon's at the full.'
Meanwhile, I was getting no better, but worse,
Detesting the sight of both doctor and nurso ;
And at length, in despair, I became sick at heart,
For I'd baffled all medical science and art ;
With so vicious a system health scarcely agrees,
While the patients take physic, the doctors take fees."

This, then, O ye gods ! is the case of my friend :
To what farther befel me, I pray you attend,
And say if I erred, O ye judges of right ! .
When I banished all drugs and drug-doctors from sight :
I grew better without them, but needed support,
For with each change of wind a fresh illness I caught .
But worst of all horrors, by Jove I speak true,
When I looked in the glass my complexion was blue.
I had almost despaired of obtaining assistance,
And soon would have ended this weary existence,
But one day I heard of a new mode of curing,
So simple, successful, and mark you,—enduring.
In water was found a new system of healing,
Its wonderful virtue each day was revealing ;

That water, which nature with bountiful hand,
Has spread through the length and the breadth of the land,—
Water, the fresh, unpolluted, and bright,
That sparkles and dances in diamonds of light ;
Water, that's born of the cloud and the hill,
That gleams in the sun-shower and laughs in the rill ;
That water, which mortals so long had neglected,
And never its secret of healing suspected.
In courts hydropathic, I soon took up quarters,
Most eager to try the effect of these waters.
I consulted a man of profound erudition,
One really deserving the name of physician ;
Not one who had gone just the rounds of the college,
And then stopped content with its old-fashioned knowledge ;
But ventured to study, and think, and improve,
And the foolish false notions of bigots remove.
I consulted the doctor, so skilled and profound,
In the water-cure treatment, too, very renowned.
I shall never regret that I went to that place,
His well-practised eye soon decided my case.
I had now to ' abstain from all revels and riot,
And follow in earnest the plain rules of diet.
'Tis nature's first law, and must not be transgressed,
'Tis because we neglect it our frames are oppressed.
If men took but moderate care of their health,
Much more they'd improve both in wisdom and wealth ;
But they eat and they drink in inordinate measure,
And barter life's bliss for a few moments' pleasure.

If your health you'd improve, and life's blessing extend,
To these 'General Precepts' most strictly attend.'
Thus spoke a true friend, a physician, and sage,—
Oh! would he were heard by the youth of the age.
With such combination of wisdom and water,
I soon got abroad without aid from the porter.
The treatment gave vigour from morning to night,
To the lame it was legs, to the blind it was sight;
It came in the form of cold towel and sheets,
Pail douches and sitz baths and other odd seats.
If but once you had seen these new life-giving places,
Full soon you'd have turned your celestial faces.
Poor mummified mortals make quizzical scenes
Coming out, half defunct, from th' infernal machines:
Between five or six in the morning we're started,
From the pleasantest dreams we are speedily parted;
The bath-man is ready with sitz bath or sheet,
A cold clammy covering we shudder to meet;
We welcome the blanket, get rubbed like a horse,
Then take a brisk walk, and come back in full force.
'No time for the toilet, there's no time to talk,
Throw open the window, get out for a walk,
Get a thorough re-action, set up circulation.'
Yes, this is the tenor of his conversation.
Or packed in damp sheets from the toe to the chin,
Swathed about in wet blankets, and tightly tucked in,
We lie soddened and steamed like a pea in a pot,
Then are doused in a cold-bath, which makes us quite hot,

And sends a deliciously exquisite glow
Through the heart and the brain, from the crown to the toe:
Or if more profusely we need to perspire,
We sit down most pleasantly over a fire,
Which burns from a spirit-lamp placed on the floor,
And under our snug wrappings opens each pore ;
Then we sit in a tub, with our chin on our knees,
And wait while our nether extremities freeze.

The breakfast soon ready, we meet smiling faces,
And sit down with appetites keen in our places.
No honey or marmalade graces the board,
But the best bread and butter the town can afford.
A diet to some is prescribed without question,
And weighed to the ounce to prevent indigestion.
At one, or half-past, there's a hot dinner smoking,
Better joints, better cooked could be set before no king.
Five ounces for some, that was rather provoking,
For some one dish only, which will not bear joking.
No savoury dishes, no pepper, no mustard,
No pancakes or omelettes, not even a custard,
No bottles of pickles, no Indian curry,—
With gusto all eat, but don't eat in a hurry ;
No brain-heating wine, but the draught of the fountain
We quaff, crystal clear, as it comes from the mountain :
So Nature, well pleased with these sensible ways,
Rewards all such treatment with health and long days.
Take care of the stomach, 'tis made of queer metal ;
If you stuff it too much your accounts you must settle.

There's tea served at seven, the last of the meals,
When the table, as usual, the same fare reveals ;
And though all admit that variety's pleasing,
Their cheerful good humour is always unceasing.
They talk of the feats they've performed through the day ;
Some have spent it in walking and others in play,
Some figure at billiards and others at bowls,
Some visit the Wych, never minding the tolls ;
Some keep in their pockets superfluous cash,
And can spend it at Malvern without being 'flash ;'
Some stroll about slowly in gardens and grounds,
Some on donkeys or mules go the orthodox rounds ;
They mount to the beacon, or drink at the well,
Or hunt out the beauties of each pretty dell ;
But my vein is not pastoral, gods, or I'd say
On what vision of beauty awakens the day,
When the curtains of night are rolled back from the bed
Where he yesterday laid his magnificent head ;
Far below, a soft plain fair as Tempe, and specked
With temple, and hamlet, and orchard-croft, decked
With the gold of the Autumn, yet bright with the green
Which Pan loves to lavish on such a sweet scene ;
One may mark where below him the grey abbey tower
Shows its time-frosted front above mansion and bower,
And tells by a Gothic grace still undecayed,
Where the monks of past ages have chanted and prayed,
With the sudden sun-bursts through the clouds of bright snow
Making islands of light on the valley below,

And broad gleams with shadows adrift in their train,
Sweeping after each other o'er hill-side and plain ;
And, elsewhere, blue hills on the line of the sky,
And a deep Delphic grove on the hill-slope hard by :
Then at eve silent stars cluster close round the crown,
That on this world of wonder looks royally down
As it fades from the view, and soon forest and meadow,
Shrine, hill-side, and hamlet are sleeping in shadow.
At all hours away, minus bonnets and hats,
Some at night may be seen walking out with the cats.
This same water-treatment's a foe to vain fashion,
'Tis a damper to dress with its frivolous passion ;
But it sweetens the temper and scours the tongue,
It cleanses the liver and strengthens the lung,
Gives tone to the mind and the spirits and body,—
By spirits, I don't mean your famed whiskey toddy.
The evening meal over, the ladies retire,
The gentlemen yield to the charms of the fire,
And sitting around, like the lords of creation,
Discuss the important affairs of the nation.
Some mortals, however, vote politics stupid,
And therefore soar up to the regions where Cupid
Still tries to assert his all-powerful sway,
Since water allows him no license by day.
One by one, in the drawing-room each one appears,—
Oh ! would ye had been in those luminous spheres,
Where, in circles so brilliant, with radiant faces,
Sit poets and painters,—the muses and graces :

Amusements in varied succession soon follow;—
Such sounds as would charm the proud ear of Apollo
Burst forth from the forms of pianos and fiddles.
With songs and sonatas, conundrums and riddles,
No discord disturbs those harmonious hours:
In the garden of health there is nothing but flowers.
But the key-note is changed at the hour of nine,
The sweet charms of music we sadly resign,
A key quite a stranger to musical fingers,
Locks up the piano. Still harmony lingers,
Some try their genius in acting charades,
And others at chess, or a round game of cards;
No lack of amusement, both piquant and witty,
One of Sheridan's plays or a popular ditty.
But all pleasures, sooner or later, must end:
On keeping strict hours, too, health must depend;
At ten, all retire, and soft silence supreme
Reigns over those spheres which have furnished a theme
For pleasant remembrance to many a heart,
And cause of regret, when the time comes to part:
But not do we part 'til heart-incense of ours
To the Throne of the Father Omnipotent soars,
As together we breathe with the fading of light
Our praise for the day, and our prayer for the night.

Not long in those halls was there need to remain;
Full soon, such high health you're enabled to gain,
The blood flows once more with a full tide of joy;
And the old man can rival the speed of the boy.

Such marvels I witnessed, ye scarce would believe :
Great Jove, bear me witness: 'tis vain to deceive :
The lame I saw walk, and limbs long paralytic
Stood forth in full strength to defy every critic.
But chief good of all; the whole system was strengthened,
And the years of men's lives were amazingly lengthened.
The fountains of life were redeemed from impurity,
And extracted all drugs, which there lurked in obscurity,
Those poisons which doctors (tho' they called it healing,)
Were for ever in life's sacred tissues concealing.
Poor mortals succumb to their potions and pills,
And with money and life settle infinite bills ;
For one demon cast out full a score find a place,
And then the poor victim's life ebbs out apace,
And parents are robbed of their children so dear,
For a third of those born die the very same year.
These griefs are called ' trials ' by learned divines,
They are ' sent by the gods ' and so no one repines.
Thus in error men live and grow weary of life,
And the name of reform is the signal for strife.
Few think for themselves, and they mostly in chains,
So that everywhere sickness triumphantly reigns.
How I longed to expose such a horrible system,
And in Truth's long-neglected safe cause to enlist 'em.
But mortals are stubborn and stick to old ways,
And the ' old-fashioned times ' deem more worthy of praise ;
If by chance one gets up and invites reformation,
He is quickly cried down as a foe to the nation ;

Falsehood passes unchallenged from parent to child,
And Truth in her struggles for life is reviled.

When at length the full term of my leave had expired,
And my presence in loftier spheres was required,
My friends rallied round me, but free from all pains
I departed in slumber, as Nature ordains.

Unseen I soared upward—they took me for dead,
For I caught the soft whisper—'The spirit is fled.'
Learn, then, O ye gods, my report now completed,
How your kindest intentions are ever defeated;
And if any power from hence can avail,
I pray you such mischiefs to try and curtail."

The spirit had ceased—and with Jove's approbation,
The Olympian throng uttered loud exclamation—
"Three cheers for cold water, and down with old Bacchus,
We'll each have from henceforth a bathman to pack us."
Full savage looked Bacchus and rose to reply,
But was quickly put down by Jove's terrible eye;
Great uproar ensued, and confusion prevailed,
But here this account must be straightway curtailed.
Their strife was so fierce (for I left them debating),
I was roused from my dream, and the bathman was waiting.

And now my dear friends of the warm heart and true,
Whose memory I ever hold fondly, for you,
I dotted this down on a bright day and merry,
In record of happy times spent at The Bury.

Rejoinder.

TOBY FILLPOTS solemnly listeneth to the recital of the
melodious Lay, and thus respondeth :—

I've heard the Lay :—'tis neatly done,
And writ with animation ;
There's spirit in the tale, and fun
Enlivens the narration.

And bright the merry poet's wit,
Like laughing, twinkling stars,
Narrates as how in social fit
Gods,—Juno, Jove, and Mars—

As gods and goddesses should do
Upon Olympus' forum,
Conduct themselves, like me or you,
With drawing-room decorum.

How solemnly they silence keep,
While listening to the story,—
Of all the wanderer had to speak
Of Earth's terrestrial glory.

Of railroads, and the mighty ship
Now safe at sea majestic,—
Of Earth's fair daughters' cherry lip,—
Of telegraphs electric,—

Of Malvern,—and her mountain side,
Her broad-spread verdant valley,
Serene and peaceful, far and wide,
Still guiltless of "Aunt Sally,"—

Of Malvern and her crystal rills,
Her Medicos aquatic,
Who cure poor mortals' thousand ills
By treatment hydropathic :

And much the wanderer had to tell
Of douches, sitz, and packings,—
Of drinkers at St. Ann's cool well,—
Of shallow baths, and splashings,—

When Bacchus jumped upon his cask,
Impatient his demeanour :—
"Permit me, gods," says he, "to ask,
Why listen to this dreamer?"

Then Bacchus cleared his husky speech,
And tips a wink at Venus,
As if to say, "My duck, don't peach
About the joke between us."

And then proceeds: "The fellow's tale
Is not so badly told;
But, gods, ye know a proverb stale,—
'All glitterings are not gold.'

- " A merry tale of pleasant lark,
And well he paints the scenes ;
But note again an old remark,—
 'Twill do for the marines.'
- " Dost think ye, O immortal gods—"
 (And bolder grown, he goes on,)
" Dost think ye,—come,—I'll lay some odds—
 (For these are things I knows on.)
- " I'll lay some odds,—a sporting stako,—
And even prudent Juno
Will back me for Apollo's sake,
 (Or *some one* else, that you know.)
- " That even Jovo, Olympian king,
Whoso word we all obey,
Will not declare that crystal spring
Is better than Tokay!
- " What wine,—old rosy honoured wine,—
That brightens beauty's cheek,
Gladdens all hearts,—aye, yours and mine,—
And makes the poets speak.
- " That mead, methoglin, Barclay's stout,
And early purl, and sherry,
And good old port, that cures the gout,
And makes e'en Pluto merry.

" That brimming cups and flowing bowls,
Forsooth, are *now* our warning !
And sing no more old jovial souls,—
' We won't go home 'till morning.'

" That these good drinks the gods provide
For base ungrateful men,
Are *now* to fill old ocean's tido,
And ne'er be drunk again !"

Thus Bacchus spoke :—his face was flushed,
(Not used to public speaking ;)
For just a minute, then, was hushed
That great Olympian meeting :

When Jove himself, majestic god,
(Tho thunder his invention,)
Uprose, and with a solemn nod,
Bespoke their calm attention.

" Subjects and gods,"—saith he, " to tell
What hero so well is known
Is needless,—on such themes to dwell :
Tectotalers we 're none !

" Our Bacchus, who sometimes gets *fou*,
To-day has wisely said,
Cold water, as is known to you,
Gets seldom in the head.

" 'Tis true,—and if at Malvern's shrine
Weak mortals to keep sober,
Prefer cold water to warm wine,—
Be *ours* the old October.

" We'll quarrel not with men who drink
At bleak St. Ann's cold spring;
We longest live,—we gods,—who think
That ruby wine's the thing.

" And if at pleasant Holyrood,
Or the Bury's calm seclusion,
Men *will* prefer, in wayward mood,
To bask in the delusion,—

" That cold spring water takes the palm
From juicy grapes distilling,
Let them, to keep their spirits calm,
Go pump,—and save their shilling!

" Let them go drink it, then, I say,
Enjoy it in the pack,
If to humanity's decay
'Twill bring rude vigour back.

" Life's but a dream! and short the span
Of time to mortals given:
We'll grudge not water to the man,
While gods drink wine in heaven!"

Jove ceased :—and straightway then uprose
The goddess of the seas,
And begged permission to propose—
“ A health to the M.D s.”

“ To Wilson,—who first tapped the spring
Of Malvern’s healing fountain,—
To Gully,—who renown will bring
For aye to Malvern’s mountain.—

“ And, then, to him whose roof-tree tells
Physicians more than one son
Brought to the Bury’s limpid wells
The fame of Doctor Johnson.”

Jove quits his throne :—when hark !—a shout
From gallant Mars now made is,—
“ A three times three !—come give it out,—
For the Malvern lovely ladies.”



Old Malvern and New.

Oh! for the days of the monks of old,
All shaven and shorn and burley,—
At set of sun their beads they told,
And again, in the morning early.

Jovial friars!—they tipped the bowl
As soon as they shrived the sinner,—
Nourishing body as well as the soul,—
They ask him to stay to dinner.

And these were the folk who, long ago,
“Gave the tone to society;”
But then, as all of us very well know,
There was not so much variety

As in the present year of grace
Engages the minds of men;
For you and I go along at a pace
That would much astonish them.

These jolly monks were judges, I wot,
Of soil in a fertile vale,—
To fatten their beeves, and yield a crop
Of barley to brew their ale,

And Malvern valley was rich and fair,
And screened from the cold North wind,
So their abbey walls they builded there,—
And left the world behind!

For silent was then the old hill side,
And nought but the woodman's cot
Was then to be seen the valley wide,
And Commissioners were not.

Well,—in these days of departed yore,
These monks of Malvern Abbey,
In larder and cellar, laid up a store
Of victual,—by no means shabby.

The stout Earl Beauchamp sent a buck,—
Lord Coventry sent them a salmon,—
And the yeomen hard by, to bring good luck,
Sent Hodge to the gate with a gammon.

And a butt of sack from the Sheriff came;
From the Lord of the Manor, a kid;
And, at Christmas time, what a basket of game
From the doughty Knight of the Rhyd!

It was then how the buttery hinges swung,
And the kitchen smoke ascended!
What rattle of platters, when mass had been sung
And the Pater Noster ended!

But, now, on the site of that abbey proud,
There's been such desecration,
As would make the old abbot turn round in his shroud
In amazing consternation!

For Doctor Wilson has built thereon
A mansion most emphatic,
Where he cures all ills of flesh and bone
By system hydropathic;

And he packs and douches and sweats away,—
And a dozen doctors more,—
Almost on the spot where,—lack-a-day!—
Stood the old abbey floor.

And instead of ale, in the brimming can,
For the weary stranger's lip,
They fill their jug at the well of St. Ann,
And bid us bumpers sip!

No longer the brother, with shaven pole,
Is seen at the abbey door,
With larder spoil, and guerdon dole,
To cheer the wandering poor.

No,—the times are changed,—on Malvern chase
No longer the falcons fly,—
Things wear now, indeed, a different face
Than they did in days gone by.

The red deer now no longer springs
On the heathery mountain's brow,—
No, the donkeys are the only things
You'll find on the Beacon now,—

And now, on the eve of good St. John
No wassail—no throwing the sock ;—
Such doings the folk would frown upon
Who're in bed by ten o'clock !

But the abbey church, with its mossy stone,
Stands still to tell the story
Of olden days, now past and gone,
In venerable glory !

And the old grey hills stand stern and fast,—
No change *their* mein can sully,—
They're the only things, I believe, will last
In spite of Doctor Gully !

But, I'd rather the abbot was in his cell,
And the shaven monks were back,
Than, now, to be douched in a dismal well,
Or put in that horrid pack !

For I've been packed, and douched, and drenched,
And sweated—when plethoric—
So my spirits fire they've somewhat quenched,
Tho' I'm still among the quick.

Its a matter of taste,—however, for me
The days of ancient history—
Rather than *now* a patient be
Of the hydropathic mystery.

But, stay,—tho' the monks are very dead,
And the Abbot of Malvern is clay,
A good priest stands in their church instead,
To light us on our way.

And light us he does, with a truthful brand,
And a pastor's faithful zeal :—
Him thanks we owe, for his guiding hand
Thro' life,—for woe or weal.

FITZ SITZ.

Malvern.

